

## Message Text

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16

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 IO-04 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 SCA-01 SCS-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01

DRC-01 DPW-01 /074 W

----- 039976

R 181824Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 747

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 6366

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PFOR, UR, SREF

SUBJECT: CHILEAN INTEREST IN POSSIBLE SOVIET RELEASE OF  
POLITICAL PRISONERS

1. RIGHT-WING, SENSATIONALIST AFTERNOON "LA SEGUNDA" OCT 16  
HEADLINED "SOVIETS WILL AGREE TO LIBERATE PRISONERS -- RED CROSS  
OFFICIAL ARRIVES TODAY." STORY CLAIMED USSR HAD PREPARED LIST  
OF SOME 100 CHILEAN DETAINEES, HEAD BY CHILEAN COMMUNIST  
PARTY SEC GEN LUIS CORVALAN, IT WOULD LIKE TO SEE FREED, AND  
WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE SOME KIND OF DEAL FOR THIS PURPOSE.  
STORY FURTHER CLAIMED ICRC OFFICIAL DENIS FELDMEYER HAD BEEN  
DISPATCHED TO SANTIAGO ON A "SPECIAL MISSION" ON THIS SUBJECT.  
LA SEGUNDA VERSION WAS PICKED UP NEXT DAY IN OTHER CHILEAN  
MEDIA AND GIVEN HEAVY PLAY.

2. BOTH ICRC HEADQUARTERS AND LOCAL ICRC REP PROMPTLY AND  
VEHEMENTLY DENIED ANY "SPECIAL MISSION." FELDMEYER, AS IT  
TURNS OUT, IS A 25-YEAR-OLD FIRST-TOUR ICRC DELEGATE WHO HAS  
JUST JOINED ICRC STAFF HERE AND IS RATHER BEMUSED OVER HIS  
UNEXPECTED PUBLICITY.

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3. SANTIAGO PRESS SUBSEQUENTLY PRINTED REUTER-LATIN DISPATCH FROM MOSCOW REPORTING DENIAL BY TASS WRITER SERGEI BULANTSEV THAT USSR WOULD BE INTERESTED IN FREEING A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PRISONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR AN EQUAL NUMBER OF CHILEAN DETAINEES.

4. COMMENT: GOC IS CONTINUING TO TRY TO MILK ITS "CHALLENGE" TO USSR AND CUBA ON POLITICAL PRISONER ISSUE FOR ALL POSSIBLE PROPAGANDA VALUE BUT HAS BEEN FRUSTED BY DECISION OF ITS OPPONENTS TO IGNORE ISSUE. APPARENTLY CHILEANS NOW HAVE DRAWN AT LEAST A TINY SPARK OF SOVIET IRRITATION. WELL-PLACED LOCAL UN SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF THAT USSR HAD INDEED EXPRESSED SOME GENERAL INTEREST TO ICRC HEADQUARTERS IN SEEKING RELEASE OF CHILEAN COMMUNISTS BUT DOUBTED STRONGLY USSR WOULD MAKE ANY REAL CONCESSION TO GOC.  
POPPER

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NNN

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